

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 183

91ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON.

Pre-filed December 18, 2000, and 1000 copies ordered printed.

ANNE C. WALKER, Chief Clerk

0516L.011

AN ACT

To amend chapter 537, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to compensation for wrongful imprisonment.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 537, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be
2 known as section 537.780, to read as follows:

**537.780. 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, any person convicted
2 and subsequently imprisoned for one or more crimes which the person did not commit
3 may, under the conditions hereinafter provided, bring a suit for damages in circuit court
4 against the state of Missouri.**

**5 2. The person, hereinafter referred to as the "claimant", shall establish the
6 following by clear and convincing evidence:**

**7 (1) That the claimant was convicted of a crime and subsequently sentenced to a
8 term of imprisonment, served all or any part of the claimant's sentence; and**

9 (2) The claimant did not commit the crime for which he or she was convicted; and

**10 (3) The claimant did not by his or her own conduct cause or bring about the
11 claimant's conviction; and**

12 (4) Was released by the state.

**13 3. The suit, accompanied by a statement of the facts concerning the claim for
14 damages, verified in the manner provided for the verification of complaints in civil actions,
15 shall be brought by the claimant within a period of two years after his or her release from
16 imprisonment, or after the grant of a pardon to the claimant; provided, however, that any
17 eligible claimant released or pardoned during the five-year period prior to the effective
18 date of this section shall have two years to file a suit.**

19 4. (1) Damages awarded pursuant to this section shall not exceed twice the amount

20 of the claimant's income in the year prior to his or her incarceration or twenty thousand
21 dollars for each year of incarceration, whichever is greater.

22 (2) In addition to the damages awarded pursuant to subdivision (1) of this
23 subsection, the claimant shall be entitled to receive reasonable attorney fees.

24 5. (1) A person serving a term of imprisonment for a crime other than a crime of
25 which the person was mistakenly convicted shall not be eligible to file a claim for damages
26 pursuant to the provisions of this section.

27 (2) A person shall not be eligible to file a claim for damages pursuant to the
28 provisions of this section if the sentence for the crime of which the person was mistakenly
29 convicted was served concurrently with the sentence for the conviction of another crime.

30 6. The provisions of this section providing damages and attorney fees shall be made
31 through appropriations as provided by law.